

visa regime for Indian nationals which includes pre-verification of visa applications on a case-to-case basis causing long delays and inconvenience to Indian nationals desirous of visiting Pakistan.

[Translation]

Bofors scam

3853. DR. MAHADEEPAK SINGH SHAKYA:
PROF. PREMSINGH CHANDUMAJRA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether investigation in Bofors Scam that took place in the last decade, has not been completed since the case is pending in Swiss Court;

(b) if so, whether Swiss Court has asked for a comprehensive guarantee from the Indian officials during the last few months;

(c) if so, the reasons for asking such guarantee and the purpose for which the court wants such guarantee;

(d) whether any decision has been taken by the Indian officials in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the names of the persons, who filed the Bofors Scam case in the Swiss Court?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e). A statement is attached.

STATEMENT

The Government of India had furnished certain guarantees to the Swiss authorities under Article 6 of European Convention for Human Rights and Article 3(3) of International Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters on 10.02.1994. The Cantonal Court of Geneva in its judgement pronounced on 20.12.1995 held that these guarantees were insufficient and that the case may be sent back to the Examining Magistrate of Geneva for obtaining sufficient guarantees from the Government of India. An appeal was filed against the said decision of the Cantonal Court by the Swiss Federal Court (Supreme Court). The appeal filed by the Swiss authorities was allowed by the Swiss Federal Court on 16.04.1996 which held that the guarantees furnished by the Government of India were sufficient.

The names of the appellants who had challenged the guarantees furnished by the Government of India have not been disclosed by the Swiss authorities.

Population Growth

3854. SHRI VIRENDRAKUMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether environment is being polluted due to the increase in population, especially in cities; and

(b) if so, the measures being taken to check the increasing population in the cities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) Rapid population growth may lead to pressure on environment.

(b) Family Planning Services and information are provided in urban areas through Hospitals, post partum centres, and urban family welfare centres.

As per information given by the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment a centrally sponsored scheme named Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns is under implementation for strengthening infrastructure facilities in selected small and medium towns to enable them to emerge as centres of growth and employment, thereby reducing the incentive for population living in hinterlands to migrate to large cities.

[English]

Travel documents of Indians in Gulf Countries

3855. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Indian emigrant workers in the Gulf countries lose their passport and other travel documents; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the arrangements that exist in our missions to help such workers?

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJARAL): (a) There are instances of loss of passports by Indian workers in Gulf countries.

(b) Any Indian Mission which is approached by a worker is authorised to issue a duplicate passport after receiving confirmation of passport particulars from the authority that issued the lost passport. The exact number of such cases are being obtained and would be laid on the Table of the House.